

SOUTH



BEND

JULY 2007

Building a 21st Century City
MAYOR STEPHEN J. LUECKE

Letter from the Mayor

Dear South Bend Residents,

The beauty, vibrancy and diversity of South Bend's many neighborhoods is one of our community's greatest assets. From historic downtown neighborhoods to the new and growing residential areas on the south side, South Bend is the perfect place to buy a house, start a family or just to call home. Some of our traditionally strong neighborhoods, however, have been weakened by the over abundance of vacant and abandoned homes. Derelict housing can have devastating effects, de-stabilizing neighborhood communities, increasing crime and lowering property values. It is an issue that must be addressed.

In the last State of the City Address, I promised to reduce vacant housing by 10% over three years. It is my pleasure to report that we will reach our 10% goal in only two years. Ultimately, we will reduce vacant housing by 20%, while reducing abandoned housing by 72%.

In May I introduced a comprehensive initiative to combat vacant and abandoned housing. City departments are already at work on this strategy, through which we will attract homebuyers of all income levels to targeted neighborhoods. We will build on the City's existing code enforcement and use new public-private partnerships to revitalize 445 properties.

My initiative calls for the city to:

- Identify entire blocks as the focus of a specific demolition and redevelopment strategy, starting, initially, with the City's west and northwest sides.
- Acquire and clean out 45 abandoned homes on the City's northwest and west sides.
- Sell these homes, for \$1 apiece, to homebuyers or developers who will invest an estimated \$75,000 to completely refurbish each home and then live in the homes for at least 5 years.
- Demolish 400 substandard properties citywide and in targeted neighborhoods.
- Work with nonprofit organizations to replace these vacated properties with infill housing, or, when possible, to sell the lots to neighboring homeowners.
- Provide incentives for residential housing development in South Bend.
- Propose, for consideration by the Common Council, a vacant house registration ordinance requiring registration of any home vacant for more than 90 days and in violation of existing code regulations.
- Free up additional resources for boarding up unsafe structures.

Implementation of this strategy will be a significant step toward returning neighborhoods to productive use. We will enable homebuyers to rediscover the joy of front-porch communities, build on a national trend of homebuyers returning to urban neighborhoods, and turn around South Bend's distressed neighborhoods, making them shine once more.

Sincerely,

Steve
Mayor Steve

THIS MONTH...

Mayor's Letter

Art Beat: Save the Date!

Did You Know? Common Property

Maintenance Code Violations

Morris Star Rises in National Rankings

Outdoors in South Bend

Studebaker Commemorative Bricks

Fire Hydrant Paint Kits

City Celebration - HPC Workshop

Wednesday

Local Government Academy

Downtown South Bend, Inc.



Thursday, Sept. 6, 2007, 4 – 8:30 p.m.

Does your business involve the visual arts?

Dance? Music? Food? Are you looking for a fun and inexpensive way to get thousands of people to see, hear or taste your work? If so, Art Beat 2007 is the perfect showcase for you – and now is the perfect time to reserve your space.

Currently in its fifth year, Art Beat has become one of downtown South Bend's most celebrated public events. Each year, on the Thursday after Labor Day, the streets of downtown South Bend become one of Indiana's largest art galleries. This community-wide showcase of the cultural arts draws more than 500 individual and group artists who want to participate in the special event. Featuring dancers, musicians, actors, poets, and artists of all kinds, Art Beat is attended by more than 7,000 people from the area — and you can be there!

Go to www.ArtBeatSouthBend.org and “click “participant registration.” It's that easy. Please review this year's guidelines and register by **Aug. 17, 2007.**

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AYUDA PARA TRADUCIR ESTE DOCUMENTO,
O SI TIENE ALGUNA PREGUNTA, POR FAVOR
LLAME AL TELÉFONO (574) 235-5858 X 1000.



Did You Know? Common Property Maintenance Code Violations

As the City works to clean up abandoned & vacant properties, we ask for property owners' help in making our neighborhoods clean and pleasant places to live, by preventing or remedying the following common code violations:

Environmental Violations:

- Uncollected trash, garbage, litter, and debris
- Fallen trees, stumps, dead trees, and cut brush
- Debris from demolition
- Appliances or furniture in yard
- Auto parts and scrap metal
- Grass over 9 inches tall

Code Enforcement Procedures:

1. An Inspector verifies a code violation and issues a written notice to the property's owner describing the problem. South Bend ordinance requires at least 48 hours notice be given for compliance.
2. If there is no compliance, the Clean-Up Crew will clean the property and the property owner will be billed for the cost of clean-up. Minimum charge is \$111.00.
3. The City's Department of Solid Waste can remedy many problems that involve removal of trash and debris. They can be reached at 574.277.8823.

Housing Violations:

- Roofs that are not weather tight.
- Substandard or inoperable plumbing, electrical wiring, or heating systems.
- Deteriorated and unsound structures.
- Open cracks and breaks in foundation walls.
- Lack of adequate heat and hot water.
- Holes and rotting boards in exterior walls

Code Enforcement Procedures

1. An Inspector determines if there are a significant number of structural defects to make the house unsafe. Minor violations are also noted since they may lead to more serious problems.
2. A letter is sent to the property owner requesting the property owner to repair the violations in 15 or 30 days, depending on the seriousness of the violations.
3. If there is no compliance at the end of the designated period of time, the property owner is asked to appear before the Code Enforcement Hearing Officer.
4. At the hearing, a repair date is established with the property owner.
5. If the repairs are not made by that time, the case is referred to the Legal Department for legal action.
6. Extension may be granted to property owners who have exhibited a willingness to rehabilitate their property.

The primary goal of Code Enforcement is to ensure the health and safety of all South Bend residents through a systematic, sensitive enforcement of City ordinances. For more information, or to report a violation, please contact the Department of Code Enforcement at 235-9486, or visit www.southbendin.gov/code.



Morris Star Rising High in National Rankings

South Bend's Morris Performing Arts Center is once again ranked by Pollstar in the top 100 Theater Venues Worldwide, and they are moving up! The Morris jumped to #38 for 2006, up from their 2005 ranking of #46. South Bend's favorite performance venue shines in stellar company, alongside Radio City Music Hall and the Coliseum at Caesars Palace, and topping the Rosemont Theatre in Chicago and Fox Theatre in Detroit, according to the January 15, 2007, special edition of Pollstar.

"The Morris Performing Arts Center is a cornerstone of downtown South Bend," commented Mayor Stephen J. Luecke. "The vision and hard work of the Morris staff continues to bring national recognition to South Bend and quality entertainment to the Indiana/Michigan area, and I congratulate them on this most recent achievement."

"The Morris is proud of the fact that it has been consistently ranked among the top 50 theaters worldwide based on ticket sales," commented Dennis J. Andres, Executive Director. "The Morris continues to have a strong economic impact on downtown South Bend. We strive to meet promoters' expectations to attract a wide variety of events to the Morris and continue to be 'the hottest ticket in town' and in the entire region!"

Pollstar is the concert industry's leading trade publication. Its rankings are based on total ticket sales.

In addition to its ever-soaring yearly standing in the Pollstar rankings, the Morris received the 2006 Prime Site Award from Facilities Magazine for its outstanding service to event clientele, based on the opinions of booking agents, promoters and talent buyers. The Morris' state-of-the-art marquee was also featured in the October 2006 edition of "Signs of the Time" magazine, an international publication for the sign industry.



COMMEMORATIVE BRICKS

The "Studebaker Story" and the building of the Studebaker National Museum would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts of our South Bend family. Many of you worked at Studebaker or had friends or relatives who worked there. The Museum wants to recognize their contribution, by offering the public the opportunity to purchase an inscribed commemorative brick to be laid in the Memorial Garden, south of the Museum.

- \$150 – 4x8 Brick (1 line inscription)
- \$250 – 8x8 Brick (2 line inscription)
- \$1,852* – 12x12 Brick (5 line inscription or logo) *The Studebaker brothers founded their blacksmith shop in 1852.

When the limited supply of bricks has been purchased, the program will be discontinued. To order your brick, or for more information, please call the Studebaker National Museum at 235-9714, or visit us online at studebakermuseum.org.



Bend residents will now have over 11 miles of Riverwalk to enjoy, stretching from IUSB to the Darden Pedestrian Bridge. Stroll, jog, or bike the trails for a serene downtown experience. If you work up a sweat, try cooling off with a float down the East Race, a swim at the Potawatomi Pool, or a romp through the Kennedy water park.

If your idea of exercise includes a ball and rules, South Bend has great opportunities. Get some instruction, join a league or enter into a tournament at Elbel, Erskine or Studebaker golf courses or at the Leeper Park Tennis Center. Kids can take advantage of the O'Brian Skate Park, one of the best facilities in the region to board or roller blade.

For family fun and great exercise, spend time together at any one of South Bend's parks, playing whiffle ball or Frisbee, or just kicking a soccer ball around.

You can find a complete listing of events and activities for adults and children at www.sbpark.org, or by calling 299-4765.



TAKE PART IN PUBLIC ART!

The South Bend Fire Hydrant Painting Project is now underway! Free kits, that contain designs, instructions and paint, to refurbish a hydrant near you, are available at the Studio Arts Center, at 805/807 Lincolnway West. If you are interested in refurbishing a fire hydrant, please call Studio Arts at 288-0160, Tues - Fri. from 1 - 6 p.m., to arrange a time to pick up a kit.

Volunteers are encouraged to repaint Bicentennial fire hydrants that have become worn and rusted, or to create new ones using official historic Bicentennial designs. *Please note that only the Bicentennial designs are approved by City ordinance to be painted on City of South Bend hydrants.*

The Fire Hydrant Painting Project began in 1974, as part of the City's celebration of the Bicentennial of the American Revolution. Mrs. Ruth Von Karowsky, a local artist, created all of South Bend's designs based on Revolutionary War heroes. Refurbishing has continued, over the past 30 years, to keep the fireplugs in pristine condition.

The hydrant painting project is part of the City's Art in Public Places Initiative. For more information or questions on the Project, please contact Jennifer Jackson, Mayor's Office for Special Projects, at 235-7590, or visit our website at southbendin.gov/firehydrants.



Historic Preservation Commission WORKSHOP WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, August 29

Mr. Kurt Culbertson, Board Member of the Cultural Landscapes Foundation, will present a program on famed landscape architect George Kessler, designer of South Bend's Parks and Boulevards System. Main Branch of the St. Joseph County Public Library, 6:00 p.m. FREE admission.



LEARN ABOUT LOCAL GOVERNMENT

South Bend's FREE Local Government Academy is your chance to learn about the City, from the inside out. The Academy meets from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on Wednesday evenings, for ten weeks. The next session begins August 22, 2007, and registration is required. For more information or to register, please call the Mayor's Office at 235-9261, or visit www.southbendin.gov/localgovernmentacademy.



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About Us

Who We Are

Downtown South Bend, Inc. (DTSB) is a not-for-profit 501C(6) organization dedicated to the continued growth and prosperity of Downtown South Bend as a place to work, play, live, and shop. DTSB continually works to improve our community's quality of life through creative marketing and promotion, coordinated public/private initiatives, effective economic development and business recruitment.

How We Are Funded

DTSB is funded via voluntary BID (Business Improvement District) contributions by local property owners, TIF (Tax Increment Financing) Funds, City of South Bend general funds and parking lot management revenue. Additional funds are raised through sponsorships and grants for special events.

Governing Body

DTSB is governed by a 32 member board which includes local building and business owners, business leaders, residents and City officials. Officers of the board include Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

Areas of Concentration

Hospitality & Safety

- ◆ Ambassador Program – Clean & Safe Downtown
 - Visitor & motorist assistance
 - Hanging flower baskets - 270+ hanging flower basket throughout downtown
 - Flower beds and tree rings- 3,000+ flowers planted in beds, pots and tree rings
 - Banners and flags displayed throughout the year
 - New benches, trash receptacles and flower pots
 - Sidewalk power washing
 - Weed and graffiti removal
 - 20,000 pounds of trash collected yearly
 - Panhandling deterrent
 - Alley cleaning

Marketing & Promotions

- ◆ Special events & promotions
 - St. Patrick's Day Party
 - Red Table Plaza Concerts (11:30a-1:30p, M-F, Summer Months)
 - Art Beat (September 6, 2007)
 - Football Fridays (Friday preceding each home ND Football game)
 - Holidays with Santa (Starting first Saturday in December through December 24)
- ◆ Shop & Play Guide
 - High-end visitors guide listing retailers, restaurants and attractions
- ◆ Ribbon cuttings for new downtown businesses
- ◆ Downtown image marketing
- ◆ Group advertising programs for downtown businesses
- ◆ Downtown gift certificate program
 - As of January 2007, over \$12,000 in Downtown Dollars have been issued
 - In transition to a card program for Holiday '07 release
- ◆ Informational faxes to downtown businesses
- ◆ Downtownsouthbend.com website

Design & Land Use

- ◆ Façade & Streetscape Grant Program
- ◆ Design & Streetscape Standards Guide

Business Recruitment

- ◆ Informational packets and general assistance for new businesses inquiries
- ◆ Data resource (database) development & market profile
- ◆ Website resources
 - Real estate listings
 - Grant & loan opportunities

Neighborhood Relations

- ◆ Encourage neighborhood involvement in downtown events and programs
- ◆ Participation in neighborhood meetings and events
- ◆ Assistance with neighborhood events
 - Ambassador support
 - Equipment loan

Visit us online at
www.DowntownSouthBend.com